

Message Text

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14

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EB-07 NEA-10 ISO-00 OFA-01 /025 W

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R 241425Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO USDOC WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3499

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

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CASABLANCA FOR FISHERIES ATT

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BDIS, BEXP, EFIS, NI

SUBJ: DESCO MARINE

REF : (A) USDOC 1846; (B) LAGOS A-13, JANUARY 27, 1976

1. REFTEL (A) ARRIVED FEB. 4, TOO LATE TO PASS INFORMATION TO JEROME FOX OF BERTRAM MARINE, ANOTHER DIVISION OF WHITTAKER CORPORATION, BEFORE HE LEFT LAGOS. HOWEVER, FOX LEARNED DETAILS ABOUT AGATE FROM GODFREY AMACHREE OF REPUBLIC FISHERIES. WE UNDERSTAND AMACHREE TOLD FOX HE WOULD HANDLE AGATE (PERHAPS BY REMINDING AGATE OF NEW CORRUPT PRACTICES DECREE REPORTED IN LAGOS A-13). FOX HAS BY NOW REPORTED BACK TO DESCO MARINE.

2. FOX TOLD EMBASSY PROPOSED SALE TO REPUBLIC INVOLVED SIX 75-FOOT DESCO TRAWLERS AT DOLLARS 330,000 EACH, WITH AN EXTRA CHARGE OF DOLLARS 35,000 PER VESSEL FOR FERRYING TO NIGERIA WITH DESCO CREWS. FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF CHICAGO HAS APPARENTLY APPROVED LOAN TO REPUBLIC FOR FIRST TWO VESSELS. REPUBLIC IS AN INTERESTING NEW FIRM FORMED BY AMACHREE AND JOE IYALLA, FORMER AMBASSADOR TO U.S. AND PERMANENT SECRETARY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS UNDER GOWON. AMACHREE HIMSELF HAS EXTENSIVE OTHER INTERESTS, IN PARTICULAR DELTA AIR CHARTERS, AND DELTA OIL COMPANY OF NIGERIA. THE LATTER IS A PARTNER IN OIL CONCESSIONS WITH THE U.S. FIRM PAN OCEAN OIL. FOX SAID REPUBLIC, IN ADDITION

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TO BUYING VESSELS FOR ITS OWN USE, WAS TO BECOME DESCO MARINE

AGENT FOR NIGERIA.

3. IN ADDITION TO REPUBLIC BUSINESS, FOX APPARENTLY HAD OTHER PROFITABLE CONTACTS HERE. HE LEFT QUOTATION ON TEN 26-FOOT POLICE BOATS, AT DOLLARS 20,000 EACH, WITH NIGERIAN POLICE FORCE. WITH EMBASSY'S ASSISTANCE HE RESTORED CONTACT WITH ANOTHER FIRM, SIPOL, THAT WANTS TO ORDER TEN TRAWLERS FROM DESCO MARINE AT DOLLARS 283,000 EACH, AND THREE 28-FOOT TWIN ENGINE PLEASURE BOATS FROM BERTRAM MARINE. FOX ALSO BEGAN VERY TENTATIVE TALKS WITH SIPOL ABOUT REPRESENTING BERTRAM MARINE LOCALLY.

4. IRONICALLY, THE BOSS OF SIPOL, A DR. IGHOFOSE, ALSO HAD TO DEAL WITH THE INFAMOUS CAPTAIN AGATE, WITHOUT WHOSE CHOP APPARENTLY NO ONE CAN IMPORT A VESSEL INTO NIGERIA. ACCORDING TO FOX, IGHOFOSE TOOK CARE OF AGATE BY SENDING HIM TO THE U.S. AT IGHOFOSE'S EXPENSE TO VISIT DESCO MARINE'S FACILITIES TO QTE INSPECT UNQTE TRAWLERS PRIOR TO SHIPMENT. IN RETURN, FOX SAID, AGATE HAD WRITTEN UP A GLOWING REPORT ON DESCO MARINE.

5. IF DESCO MARINE FINDS IT IS STILL RUNNING INTO PROBLEMS AT A LATER DATE, EMBASSY WOULD BE WILLING TO MAKE DISCREET EFFORTS TO ASSIST. WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A COPY OF AGATE'S LETTER TO DESCO IN ANY CASE, AND CERTAINLY BEFORE ATTEMPTING TO TAKE ANY ACTION ON DESCO'S BEHALF.
EASUM

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